

Yamaka VAT-IND 43 (Burmese script), VAT-IND 52 (Kham script)

Laṭukikajātaka BORG-IND 49 (Burmese script, 18th c.)

Vibhaṅga VAT-IND 52 (Kham script)

Vihārakammavācā VAT-IND 44 (Burmese script)

Visuddhajanavilāsinī = Apadānaṭṭhakathā

Saccayamaka VAT-IND 43 (Burmese script)

Sīmāsammutikammavācā VAT-IND 44 (Burmese script)

Suttanipāta VAT-IND 53 (Sinhalese script)

Book Review

Catalogue of the Burmese-Pāli and Burmese Manuscripts in the Library of The Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine. Prepared by William Pruitt and Roger Bischoff. pp. iii, 187. Coloured frontispiece, 28 b&w and 31 colour plates. The Wellcome Trust, London. 1998.

The library of the Wellcome Institute possesses a fine collection of Burmese-Pāli and Burmese manuscripts, mostly purchased at auctions in London before the death of Sir Henry S. Wellcome in 1936. A few manuscripts touching on medicine have been added since then.

The Burmese-Pāli manuscripts were first catalogued by Jacqueline Filliozat in an earlier number of this Journal (*JPTS* XIX, 1993, pp. 1–41), but that catalogue left many problems unsolved, and it is no longer an adequate guide to the collection (it lists, for example, only 93 manuscripts), although the references which it gives to the category-numbers of texts listed in the Bibliography of *A Critical Pāli Dictionary* are not included in this new catalogue, and are still valuable, as are the comments about the identity of some texts, e.g. “No. 34 Gambhīyatthadesanā”. In this new catalogue a number of changes and corrections have been made to the earlier catalogue. The leaves of the manuscripts have all been put in correct order. A few texts had leaves scattered through different manuscripts, and these have now all been reunited. Many identifications of manuscripts have been added to or changed.

The catalogue of the Burmese-Pāli collection, which amounts to 121 manuscripts, has been made by William Pruitt, who has already published a catalogue and additions to the catalogue of Burmese manuscripts in the Library of Congress in earlier numbers of this Journal (*JPTS* XIII, 1989, pp. 1–31; XXIV, 1998, pp. 171–83). There are 27 Burmese manuscripts. They are catalogued by Roger Bischoff.

Almost half (55) of the Burmese-Pāli manuscripts contain *kammavācās* “verbal acts”, the texts which were used for formal acts of the Saṅgha, e.g. the ordination of a monk. These individual acts are identified for each manuscript. Besides the *Kammavācās*, other

manuscripts contain Pāli canonical texts, commentaries, extra-canonical, and grammar texts. Many of the texts are incomplete. Many of the manuscripts are, or include, Pāli-Burmese nissayas.

The titles of texts or sections of texts as listed in the margins of the manuscripts are given, and also descriptions of the wrappers or covers (some of which are very ornate), the script, and any information given in the manuscripts about dates, authors, or copyists. Details about the re-arrangement of leaves are also given. Occasionally information is given about the publication of the texts contained in the manuscripts, *e.g.* “No. 54 the Burmese nissaya Vinayasāra”, or about their presence in other collections.

Where numbers of nipātas, etc., are given, then it is not difficult for those seeking manuscripts to find relevant page numbers in PTS editions. Descriptions such as “incomplete”, *e.g.* for “No. 90 Yamaka”, are less helpful, and could usefully have been augmented by saying which pages of the PTS editions are present or missing.

The author has not followed the usual practice of quoting the beginning and end of each text. Although this might be thought to be unnecessary in the case of texts which have been identified, it might have been helpful in the case of manuscripts which are unidentified, *e.g.* “No. 105 unidentified Abhidhamma text”.

The Burmese Buddhist manuscripts include a history of Buddhism, texts on Abhidhamma, texts on monks’ discipline, biographies of the Buddha’s disciples, and records of monastic courts. There is also a manuscript of *Mālālaṅkāravatthu* — a Burmese prose work. Those with secular subjects include: decisions on secular law; horoscopes; two royal edicts in cases; manuscripts on medicine (including a collection of medical recipes), astrology and magic; an incomplete life of the Buddha in three volumes; and a schoolbook that probably belonged to a prince. A wooden tablet describes a scene from the *Vānarinda Jātaka*, and is probably a gloss to an illustration.

To the catalogue is prefixed an Introduction giving a brief survey of the collection, and transliteration tables of the three Burmese scripts

used in the manuscripts. Two are early: (1) Tamarind-seed script written in black lacquer; (2) square Burmese script written in black lacquer or engraved with a stylus on palm leaf manuscripts. One is modern: (3) round Burmese script. Added to the catalogue is an Index of the fourteen Kammavācā texts which are found in total in the manuscripts, with their distribution among individual manuscripts.

There are also indexes of: II. Works; III. Authors; IV. Place names; V. Donors, owners and copyists; VI. Place of the works in canon and commentaries. There is also a List of Abbreviations.

The catalogue concludes with black and white plates and colour plates giving examples of the decoration often found on the first and last folios of manuscripts. One manuscript has leaves made from stiffened portions of silk robes belonging to King Mindon (reigned 1852–77). Another (the Burmese one mentioned above) contains three manuscripts of folded thick paper bound in leather and painted with scenes from Gotama Buddha’s career.

The whole work is meticulously presented. Surprisingly, the misspelling (twice) of *Niddesa* on p. 121 has escaped the notice of the proofreaders.

In as much as the purpose of the Pali Text Society, as set out by the founder of the Society, is “to edit in Pali, and if possible to translate into English, such Pali books as still exist in manuscripts preserved in Europe or Asia, in order to render accessible to students the rich stores of the earliest Buddhist literature which are lying unedited and practically unused”, it is not surprising that many of the early volumes of the Society’s *Journal* contained lists of such manuscripts in libraries around the world.

The *JPTS* has continued to do this and, beside those by William Pruitt and Jacqueline Filliozat mentioned above, recent volumes have included lists of Pāli manuscripts of Sri Lanka in the Cambridge University Library by Jinadasa Liyanaratne (XVIII, pp. 131–47), and three further lists by Jacqueline Filliozat: commentaries to the *Anāgata-vamsa* in the Pāli manuscripts of the Paris collections (XIX, pp. 43–63);

Pāli manuscripts in Burmese and Siamese characters in the library of Vijayasundaramaya Asgiriya (XXI, pp. 135–91); and Pāli manuscripts from the Bodleian Library (XXIV, pp. 1–80).

Nevertheless lists, while of great value, are not sufficient in themselves, and it has been very gratifying to see the catalogues of Pāli manuscripts which have appeared in recent years, sometimes from sources where Western scholars, at least, might be forgiven for not knowing there were Pāli manuscripts, *e.g.* the Catalogue of the Otani Library palm leaf manuscripts (rev. K.R. Norman, *Buddhist Studies Review* 14, 1, 1997, pp. 63–64; Primoz Pecenko, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 41, 3, July 1998, pp. 301–304). It is to be hoped that such catalogues will continue to appear giving, perhaps, information about texts hitherto unknown or known only by name. Of particular importance will be information about the store of manuscripts at present being amassed in the Fragile Leaves Project in Bangkok. It may not be too much to hope to see, one day, a Catalogus Catalogorum of Pāli texts. Daunting though this task may be, using modern technology it should not be impossible to produce a computer file listing the names of all the Pāli texts at present known to us with information about the libraries and holdings where manuscripts of such texts are known to exist.

K.R. Norman

Index of Grammatical Points Discussed in the Notes to *Elders' Verses* I

A number of readers of Volume I of *Elders' Verses* have regretted that I did not provide an index of the grammatical points which I discussed in the notes, as I did for the later Volume II. Since I have made one for my own use, it may be useful to make it more widely available.

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